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Cooper Honored for Help With Hospital Designation

Momentum and a broad coalition of supporters brought the STEMI and stroke designated hospital idea to Jefferson City. Last night the Missouri Ambulance Association recognized 155th District Missouri Representative Wayne Cooper for helping that idea get on a bill, and get through the state legislature in an almost unheard of single session. Representative Cooper says a combination of things contributed to the momentum. The first a strong coalition with a wide base.

"We were able to bring the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services, the American Heart Association, the Missouri Ambulance Association, the Missouri State Medical Association, and Missouri Hospital Association, all five major coalitions into agreement on the language of the bill."

Cooper says having the Missouri Senate floor leader, 34th District Senator Charlie Shields pass the bill along also was a big help.

"And I also was able to get Senator Shields who is the floor leader in the senate to be the senate sponsor," Cooper said, "and so I had an able opportunity to get it on the floor in the senate."

"I was just fortunate that the house version passed and the senate was able to get theirs out, and we were able to get mine out in a hurry because I chair a committee and was able to get it up and get it out."

That momentum this past session in Jefferson City is also translating into further action. Bob Patterson, the Emergency Services Director for St. John's and the president elect of the ambulance association says this week, 60 to 70 members of a task force will be in Jefferson City.

"The task force Thursday is part of our trauma initiative, but we are trying to follow the same principles that are laid out by the time critical diagnosis so it's following the same pattern," Patterson said. "We're just looking to improve the way that we approach trauma care in the state from a variety of levels."

He adds that the designation for heart attacks and stroke centers idea started with the state EMS director at the Missouri Department of Health. Patterson says Missouri will be



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the first in the nation with the STEMI and stroke hospital designation due to the director's work.

"And I think that first in the nation, there's some pride along with that. Everybody wants to honor Doctor Bill German who was the spearhead of that initiative and unfortunately died before it was passed and wasn't able to see it come to fruition."

"We really want to move it along in his honor so we're going to keep pushing hard."

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